



Photographing Waterdrops: Exploring Macro Worlds with Harold Davis

By Harold Davis

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Capturing the fleeting, dynamic world contained within the tiniest of water droplets is one of the most challenging photographic endeavors. Like many things, the challenge is worth the effort - when done with skill, these images can become some of the most unique shots you've ever taken. In this gorgeous guide packed with creative inspiration alongside technical expertise, award-winning photographer Harold Davis shows you how he creates his stunning water drop images. From challenges to working with constantly moving subjects and reflected light to basic info on which equipment works best, this book will help all macro-loving photographers turn their lens on water, water, everywhere.

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- Sales Rank: #969125 in eBooks
- Published on: 2013-01-25
- Released on: 2013-01-25
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Waterdrop Photos and Their Stories, by Harold Davis



At Home in the Universe

At Home in the Universe

To create this partially abstract image, I used a 50mm macro lens to shoot 21 exposures of a wet spider web in the early morning sun. Most of the shots were underexposed to bring out the color saturation in the individual waterdrops, and to let the background go dark. Using layer stacking in Photoshop, I combined these 21 exposures into the composite image you see here.

Some of the waterdrops in this image are quite clearly and literally waterdrops—for example, the droplet shown with a sunburst on the lower right. However, it is not hard to imagine that one is looking at something completely different, maybe outer space or DNA strands.

Moisture on a spider web is an endlessly fascinating subject for photography, and interesting images can vary from the abstract to extremely literal, with a great deal of visual and compositional interest no matter which way you decide to go!



Piggyback Waterdrop

Piggyback Waterdrop

Out to photograph after a sudden spring shower, I was struck by the way this waterdrop “piggybacked” on the leaf, presenting a complex but simple structure with outer framing, and also the framing of the leaf within the leaf. The very defined lines of the leaves contrasted nicely with the somewhat refracted and slightly curved lines shown through the largest waterdrop.

I shot this interesting composition with a 200mm telephoto macro lens, so I could get some distance from the subject while still making a close-up photo. That way, my reflection didn’t appear in the image.



Proteus Waterdrops

Proteus Waterdrops

From a normal point of view, a wet flower in the rain looks sensuous, and smooth. With this extreme macro shot of a proteus “Scarlet ribbons”—the kind of flower you might often see at a high-end florist—you can clearly see little spikey hairs along with the red “ribbons” that give the flower its name. Close-up, the reality is different and a little more intricate than waterdrops seen from a distance. This is one of the reasons I enjoy photographing waterdrops on flowers.

To make this extreme macro shot, I used a 105mm telephoto macro lens with a 36mm extension tube, both mounted on my tripod. With my gear in place, I waited for a break in the wind so I could make a fairly long exposure (1.3 seconds) without the waterdrops or the flower moving in the breeze.

A Letter to Amazon.com Readers from Harold Davis

Dear Amazon.com Reader:

I want to tell you about my book, *Photographing Waterdrops: Exploring Macro Worlds with Harold Davis*. If you are thinking about ordering purchasing this book, it might help you to know how I came to create it, and what you’ll find in it.

The first thing that you should know is that *Photographing Waterdrops* is a true labor of love. For me, there

is nothing in the world like a rainstorm. Water is nature's way of refreshing and replenishing, and as I write in my book, without water, and waterdrops, we would have a barren planet devoid of life. As long as there are waterdrops, there is hope for our environment.

The poet William Blake wrote about worlds in a grain of sand, and waterdrops are tiny worlds not much larger than Blake's grain of sand. These are wet worlds that follow their own rules. Inside a waterdrop you'll see the play of light, shadow, color and focus. The skin of the waterdrop reflects our own world back at us.

I have been photographing waterdrops after the rain, and in fields in the morning dew, for many years. As I've said, this is because I love the way waterdrops look, the way they reflect sunshine, their brief lifespan, and the message of possibility the waterdrop conveys in a world beset by global warming.

Natural waterdrops, meaning those found outdoors in morning dew or following rain, are one of the most technically demanding kinds of subjects for macro photography.

First, they are often very, very small. Natural waterdrops are not photographed in a controlled environment. There's only so much you can do about the lighting. If there is even the slightest breeze, the surface of the waterdrop is in constant motion. And here's the clincher: the reflective, convex surface of the waterdrop means that if you are not very, very careful you, your camera and lens, and your tripod appear in the waterdrop, spoiling the naturalism of the subject matter.

All of this is described in *Photographing Waterdrops*, and I explain how to overcome these technical photographic hurdles when photographing natural waterdrops outdoors. Along the way, my book covers macro gear, exposure issues, depth-of-field, sharpness, and post-production. In other words, if you want to learn about macro photography generally you'll find plenty of information here.

With *Photographing Waterdrops*, you get two books in one: an ode to the joy that is in each waterdrop world, and in-depth technical descriptions that show you how to go about making your own waterdrop photos.

I truly hope you enjoy *Photographing Waterdrops: Exploring Macro Worlds with Harold Davis* as much as I've enjoyed creating it.

Best wishes in photography,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Review

"This is a truly great book about an underrated subject."---**Digital Photographer Magazine**

"Davis uses a score of his most lavish images as case studies in the techniques of extreme macro shooting--from lens and accessory selection to artificial lighting, to dealing with nerve-wracking challenges such as depth-of-field and shutter speed selection."---**Rangefinder Magazine**

About the Author

Harold Davis is an award-winning professional photographer. He is the best-selling author of more than 30 books, including *The Photoshop Darkroom 2: Creative Digital Transformations* (Focal Press), *Creative*

Portraits: Digital Photography Tips & Techniques (Wiley), Creative Black & White: Digital Photography Tips & Techniques (Wiley), Creative Composition: Digital Photography Tips & Techniques (Wiley), Creative Night: Digital Photography Tips & Techniques (Wiley), Creative Close-Ups: Digital Photography Tips & Techniques (Wiley), The Photoshop Darkroom: Creative Digital Post-Processing (Focal Press) and Practical Artistry: Light & Exposure for Digital Photographers (O'Reilly). Harold writes the popular Photoblog 2.0, www.photoblog2.com, and is a regular photography and Photoshop columnist for Photo.net, a photography site with more than one million members. Harold is a popular presenter on a wide range of digital photography and Photoshop topics. His workshops are sought after and often sold out. In addition to writing and photography, Harold has been a software engineer, an enterprise technology consultant, and an Internet company executive. Photographic adventures and assignments have taken him across the Brooks Range, the northernmost mountains in Alaska. He has photographed the World Trade Towers, hanging out of a small plane, followed in the footsteps of Seneca Ray Stoddard, a 19th-century photographer of the Adirondacks, and created human interest photo stories about the residents of Love Canal, an environmental disaster area. Harold is well known for his night photography and experimental ultra-long exposure techniques, use of vibrant, saturated colors in landscape compositions, and beautiful creative floral imagery. He is inspired by the flowers in his garden, hiking in the wilderness, and the work of great artists and photographers including M.C. Escher, Monet, van Gogh, and Edward Weston.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ethan Scott:

The book untitled Photographing Waterdrops: Exploring Macro Worlds with Harold Davis is the reserve that recommended to you to study. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to anyone. The language that publisher use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article writer was did a lot of investigation when write the book, and so the information that they share for your requirements is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of Photographing Waterdrops: Exploring Macro Worlds with Harold Davis from the publisher to make you much more enjoy free time.

Lourdes Tyner:

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